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25 MAY 1965

The Honorable Brockway McMillan
Director
National Reconnaissance Office

Dear Brock:

Thank you for your letter of May 3rd, dealing with the status of development of satellite general search systems.

This is obviously a matter of great importance and urgency. As you will see from the attached copy of a letter I have sent today to Deputy Secretary Vance, I propose to move quickly to review these competitive programs and establish procedures for meeting the USIB requirement.

Sincerely,

(signed) William F. Raborn, Jr.

William F. Raborn, Jr.
Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.)

Attachment

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NIPE/[] ag/10 May 65

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7 May 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: DNRO Letter dated 3 May 1965 on
General Search Satellites

1. Dr. McMillan has provided you with his summary of the progress made on developing improved general search satellite reconnaissance systems. It is basically a description of Air Force efforts in this arena. Except for the brief paragraph on Page 3, it fails to mention the major effort on FULCRUM by CIA.

2. The first page is a brief summary of the USIB requirements for new satellites and represents a mild version of the continuing NRO complaint that USIB/COMOR requirements are out of date (1960) and of little current value to the developers. What is significantly omitted is that the DCI made strong repeated appeals in late 1963 and early 1964 for a high resolution (2 to 4 ft) system with broad coverage (10 million sq. miles) like CORONA. Dr. McMillan briefed USIB on the possible solutions to this problem in March, 1963, but these were judged to be fairly inadequate and unimaginative. The DCI then charged DD/S&T with finding such a solution and this was the beginning of FULCRUM--and, incidentally, the current heated competition.

3. The subsequent discussion is concerned primarily with Air Force (NRO) activities. Although some of these contracts were begun in 1963, there is persuasive evidence that these efforts were only focused on general search systems in summer of 1964 after the FULCRUM feasibility program was authorized by Vance and McCone. The DCI and CIA were unaware of most of this activity until early in 1965, when Mr. McCone learned of it and insisted that the

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SUBJECT: DNRO Letter dated 3 May 1965 on General Search Satellites

EK and Itek systems be presented. This assymetry of access has, and continues to characterize our participation in the NRO.

5. There is a great deal more that needs to be said about the FULCRUM program and CIA's efforts in this field. However, I concur with the attached letter drafted by John Bross as a good prompt response to McMillan's version.

ALBERT D. WHEELON
Deputy Director
for
Science and Technology

Attachment:
letter by John Bross

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25 MAY 1965

**The Honorable Cyrus R. Vance
Deputy Secretary of Defense
Washington, D. C.**

Dear Mr. Vance:

I have received a letter from Dr. McMillan concerning development of new satellite reconnaissance systems for general search purposes. His letter refers to the USIB requirement of 29 July for the development of:

"A single capability for search and surveillance with continuous stereoscopic ground coverage equivalent to KH-4 and resolution equivalent to KH-7."

I should like to take this opportunity to confirm my own conviction of the importance of proceeding to meet this requirement as a matter of urgency.

As you are aware, we are continuing sustaining contracts on the FULCRUM system and have undertaken a re-evaluation of the basic Itek design. Costs in this connection, approved by Mr. McCone, aggregated one million dollars for April. Pursuant to your request, we have reviewed and substantially cut the costs of this project which are now projected for May at \$700,000. I gather that both Eastman and Itek are proceeding with the design and development of prototypes and a testing program involving tests of critical components and including over-all payload designs.

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I feel that we should meet at your early convenience to review all competitive programs and establish procedures for selecting the design best calculated to meet the USIB requirement.

Sincerely,

(signed) William F. Raborn, Jr.

William F. Raborn, Jr.
Vice Admiral, USN (Ret.)
Director

JABROSS:ag (10/5/65)

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10 May 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Satellite General Search Systems

1. The annexed involves a communication from the Director, NRO to the DCI reviewing the status of development projects for a new satellite general search system.

2. We have prepared:

a. A brief acknowledgement of Dr. McMillan's letter, for your signature.

b. A memorandum from Dr. Wheelon commenting on the DNRO memorandum.

c. A letter from the DCI to the Deputy Secretary of Defense. This letter exploits what seems to me to be an opportunity to:

(1) confirm the validity of the USIB requirement. (There has been some disposition to expand or modify the requirement to incorporate the need for "crisis management" coverage, etc. It would be helpful to get this requirement pinned down.)

(2) confirm the status of the FULCRUM project (which I have discussed orally with Cy Vance).

(3) confirm the need for early agreement on new arrangements to govern the NRP.

/s/ John A. Bross

JOHN A. BROSS
D/DCI/NIPE

3 Attachments

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